

WCCS Works Through Power Outage

As many of you know, WCCS was without electric and phone service Monday and Tuesday following the hurricane winds of Sunday, September 14th. But did you know several WCCS departments continued to provide services during the power outage?

- The Nutrition Department delivered meals to Home Delivered Meal™ clients both days.
- Nutrition only lost \$300 of food because generators were quickly up and running.
- Medical Transportation continued to run clients to medical centers that were open.
- Homecare continued to serve clients.
- The Elderly Services Program (ESP) case managers checked on “at risk” clients and their safety.
- WCCS communications was temporarily shifted to Warren County Telecommunications, lines 2237, 2271.
- Information & Referral (I&R) and ESP case management each had a staff member answering phones at WC Telecommunications.

It is amazing what can be accomplished when the only alternative is to continue to serve. Larry Sargeant, WCCS Executive Director stated, “I want to thank all the WCCS staff that worked so hard during the emergency. Thank you to Warren County Telecommunications for working with us during the power outage. And I also want to thank John Monds who assisted us with setting up the generators and restoring power to critical areas of the building. He was there when we needed him and responded in a timely manner.”

Need for 211 Demonstrated

A Warren County 211 service became a priority after the power outage created by the hurricane winds of September 14th. 211 is a three-digit dialing code for accessing community information and referral to social service providers. Local I&R services, which have been provided for over two decades through a partnership between Warren County United Way and WCCS, will become Warren County’s 211. In a community or county wide disaster 211 will provide information to citizens regarding the crisis alleviating Warren Counties 911 number to focus on emergencies.

After the hurricane winds of September 14th, 911 was inundated with callers requesting information such as “When will my electric be turned back on? “How widespread is the power outage,” etc. 211 is the number local citizens will use to get information regarding a disaster or when experiencing difficulties and needing information for basic human services.

In 2007 the Warren County United Way set up a 211 Task Force Committee to implement 211 in Warren County. The committee includes representatives from Warren County Community Services, Inc.; Sue Miller, Family Services Director, Mary Gilliam, I & R Specialist, and Dolcee Hoffman, RSVP Director. Other Warren County agencies with representatives include; the Warren County Commissioners, The Abuse and Rape

Crisis Shelter of Warren County, Warren County Telecommunications, and Warren County Combined Health District.

Currently several WCCS employees are receiving I&R certifications, software is being purchased and local phone companies are being contacted to provide 211 to Warren County residents. Finally, additional funds are being sought to fully implement 211 Services though out Warren County.